

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Chapter 6:</b> Court Involvement	<b>Effective Date:</b> July 1, 2019
	<b>Section 8:</b> Three Month Progress Report	<b>Version:</b> 6

## STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will prepare and submit to the court a [Progress Report](#) for every for every child with an open Child In Need of Services (CHINS) case under the care and supervision of DCS, as follows:

1. Every three (3) months after the Dispositional Decree; and
2. At any time after the date of an original Dispositional Decree, the court may order DCS to file a Progress Report on the progress made in implementing the decree.

**Note:** If modification of the Disposition Decree is recommended, DCS will prepare a [Modification Report](#) containing the information required and submit it to the DCS Staff Attorney so a formal court hearing may be requested.

The [Progress Report](#) will include information regarding progress made toward achieving permanency; youth voice; visitation with the parent, guardian or custodian and siblings; status of parent, guardian or custodian's progress in meeting parenting tasks consistently; and the diligent efforts of DCS to identify and locate all adult relatives of the child throughout the life of the case. If DCS receives information indicating a parent, guardian, or custodian may have violated a Dispositional Decree, including positive results of a drug or alcohol screen, the information will be included in the [Progress Report](#). DCS will consult with the resource parent(s) and include the information gathered and resource parent recommendations in the [Progress Report](#). See [Related Information](#) for further details.

DCS will submit a [Progress Report](#) to the court at least 10 days prior to a Periodic Case Review Hearing.

DCS will make a copy of the [Progress Report](#) available to the following and provide proof of service at the case review:

1. The child/youth, based upon age and developmental level;

**Note:** All youth age 14 years and older, have the right to participate in court and should receive a copy of the [Progress Report](#).

2. The child's parent, guardian, or custodian;

**Note:** The court may also provide a factual summary of the [Progress Report](#) to the child's parent, guardian, custodian, or resource parent.

3. An attorney who has entered an appearance on behalf of the child's parent, guardian, or custodian;
4. Resource parent(s);
5. Prospective adoptive parent named in a petition for adoption of the child if:

- a. Each consent to adoption of the child has been signed and received by the DCS local office,
  - b. The court having jurisdiction in the adoption case has determined that consent to adoption is not required from a parent, guardian, or custodian, or
  - c. A petition has been filed to terminate the parent-child relationship between the child and any parent who has not signed a written consent to adoption.
6. Any other suitable relative or person who has a significant or caretaking relationship with the child;
  7. Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) and/or Guardian ad Litem (GAL); and
  8. Long-term Resource Parent, if applicable. [See Related Information](#) for further details.

**Exception:** If the court determines, on the record, that the [Progress Report](#) contains information that should not be released to any person who is otherwise entitled to receive a [Progress Report](#), the court is not required to make the [Progress Report](#) available to that person. The court may provide the individual with a redacted copy of the report. However, the court will provide a copy of the [Progress Report](#) to the following:

1. Each attorney or CASA/GAL representing the child; and
2. Each attorney representing the child's parent, guardian, or custodian.

#### Code References

1. [IC 31-34-20-7 Provision of information by department of child services](#)
2. [IC 31-34-21-1: Progress reports; procedure for modification of decree](#)
3. [IC 31-34-21-4: Notice of case review; testimony in periodic case review](#)
4. [IC 31-34-21- 4.6: "Long term foster parent"](#)
5. [IC 31-34-22: Reports Required for Reviewing Dispositional Decrees](#)

### **PROCEDURE**

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Consult with the parent, guardian, custodian, resource parent, and any other professionals who have expertise related to the child and family's needs;
2. Prepare the [Progress Report](#) (see [Practice Guidance](#) for additional information);
3. Attach any additional reports to the [Progress Report](#), including positive results of a drug or alcohol screen, indicating a parent, guardian, or custodian may have violated the Dispositional Decree;

**Note:** A summary of all significant changes that may have been addressed during a Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting is sufficient as opposed to attaching the entire CFT Notes document for the court. Youth age 14 and older should have a [Youth Report to the Court](#) completed and submitted to the court by the youth if the youth is unable to attend the court hearing.

4. Obtain supervisory approval and signature;
5. Sign the [Progress Report](#);
6. Coordinate the filing of the [Progress Report](#) with the court;
7. Make a properly redacted copy of the [Progress Report](#) available to all appropriate parties and persons; and

8. Update the child's and/or family's information in the case management system as needed when changes occur regarding income and resources, parent's place of residence, and household membership.

The FCM Supervisor will:

1. Review and make any recommendations regarding the [Progress Report](#); and
2. Approve and sign the [Progress Report](#).

## PRACTICE GUIDANCE

### **Report Content**

The [Progress Report](#) should address the following elements. The court will consider these elements when making its determinations, including but not limited to:

1. Services -

- a. Documentation of services offered and/or provided to the child or the parent, guardian, or custodian, the dates of the services, and the outcome,

**Note:** Documentation of appropriate community services and treatment (including services available to an incarcerated parent through the facility) should also be included.

- b. Health and educational information, and
- c. Any additional services required for the child or the child's parent, guardian, or custodian and the nature of those services.

2. Visits -

- a. The extent to which the parent, guardian, or custodian (including noncustodial and incarcerated parents) has visited the child, including the reasons for infrequent visitation, if applicable, and

**Note:** The report should include any alternative forms of contact included in the Visitation Plan. See policies, [8.12 Developing the Visitation Plan](#) and [8.13 Implementing the Visitation Plan](#) for additional information.

- b. If siblings are separated, the extent to which sibling visits are occurring, including reasons for infrequent visitation, if applicable.

3. Compliance and Cooperation -

- a. The extent to which the parent, guardian, or custodian has cooperated with, participated in, and benefited from DCS Court Ordered services with DCS or the Probation Department, and
- b. Whether DCS, the child/youth, and the parent, guardian, or custodian has complied with the Dispositional Decree, including any court ordered services outlined in the [Case Plan \(SF 2956\)](#) (to be attached when necessary).

4. Child's Placement - (if the child is placed in out-of-home care)

- a. Whether the child is in the least restrictive, most family-like setting,
- b. Whether the child is placed close to the home of the child's parent, guardian, or custodian,
- c. Whether siblings are placed together,

- d. Whether the child is placed in proximity to the school in which they were enrolled in at the time of removal,
- e. An explanation as to why, if these conditions are not met, including efforts being made to find a more appropriate placement if applicable.

**Note:** On-going diligent efforts to identify all adult relatives of the child must be included.

5. Outcomes -

- a. The extent to which the causes for the child's out-of-home placement or supervision have been alleviated,
- b. The extent to which the parent, guardian, or custodian has enhanced his or her ability to fulfill parental obligations including if there are any limitations due to mental or physical disabilities as well as changes in employment status,
- c. Parent(s) current living arrangement,
- d. The extent to which a child's education and health is improved,
- e. Age appropriate programs and/or extracurricular activities the child/youth is involved,
- f. Completed [Youth Report to the Court](#) form for youth age 14 and older who are unable to attend a court hearing,
- g. Diligent search including search for Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) for youth age 16 and older, and documentation to support why other permanency plan options are not in the best interest of the child/youth, and
- h. A summary of all CFT Meeting notes including significant changes that occurred between court hearings.

6. Consultations -

- a. List all professionals consulted, their relationship to the child, and recommendations,
- b. Identify all persons who are part of the CFT, their relationship to the child, each meeting coordinated with them, and recommendations, and
- c. Gather and include pertinent information and recommendations from the resource parent(s).

7. Recommended Plan of Care -

- a. Treatment,
- b. Rehabilitation,
- c. Permanency Plan, and
- d. Placement for the child.

<b>FORMS AND TOOLS</b>
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- 1. [Progress Report](#) - Available in the case management system
- 2. [Modification Report](#) - Available in the case management system
- 3. [Case Plan \(SF 2956\)](#) - Available in the case management system
- 4. [Youth Report to the Court](#)

<b>RELATED INFORMATION</b>
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**Redaction**

The process of removing or concealing confidential or sensitive information from a document prior to release of the document. Redacted documents should be thoroughly reviewed by a DCS attorney prior to disclosure.

**Long-term Resource Parent**

A resource parent who has provided care and supervision for a child for at least:

1. The 12 most recent months;
2. 15 months of the most recent twenty-two (22) months;
3. Six (6) months, if the child is less than twelve months of age.